



SAN ANTONIO POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL MANUAL



Procedure 909 – Travel

Office with Primary Responsibility:	SSB	Effective Date: Prior Revision Date:	September 28, 2020 April 6, 2015
Office(s) with Secondary Responsibilities:	PSC, PNC, TSC, STC, MCC	Number of Pages:	5
Forms Referenced in Procedure:	COSA Notice of Leave COSA Travel Authorization Third Party Sponsored Travel Personal Vehicle Mileage Record	Related Procedures:	311, 902, 908

.01 INTRODUCTION

- A. Opportunities for supplemental outside training, education, and professional affiliation sometimes allow for a higher degree of individual development than would be otherwise available from local sources.
- B. Members may request authorization for travel when such travel is in the interest of the San Antonio Police Department and the City of San Antonio.
- C. This procedure provides a process whereby travel needs are requested, evaluated, prioritized, and disbursed in as fair and equitable manner as possible.

.02 POLICY

The policy of the Department pertaining to employee travel requires members to properly plan, prudently utilize, and thoroughly document expenditures allocated for the various functions necessitating travel due to limitations in the resources available for this purpose.

.03 TRAVEL NECESSARY TO APPEAR IN CONJUNCTION WITH A SUBPOENA ISSUED BY A JURISDICTION OUTSIDE OF BEXAR COUNTY

- A. Members who are subpoenaed by a jurisdiction outside of Bexar County are responsible for contacting the jurisdiction and securing travel arrangements, as well as compensation for responding to such subpoenas.
- B. No City of San Antonio (COSA), *Travel Authorization* is required for members who are subpoenaed by agencies outside of Bexar County. Members refer to GM Procedure 311, *Court Appearances*, for the process to follow to properly respond to the subpoena.

.04 NO-COST TRAVEL

- A. If there is no cost to COSA, there is no requirement for a *Travel Authorization* form. However, members must submit a request through their chain of command (up to and including their Bureau Commander) for prior approval.
 - 1. If the travel is for training or event provided by SAPD, the member shall be carried as “Special Assignment” on the Unit/Detail payroll time sheet for the days/hours of the event. The approval memo shall be kept in the member’s field file.
 - 2. If the travel is for training or event provided by an outside organization, the member shall include a *COSA Notice of Leave* form requesting Administrative Leave for the travel time along with their request, and if approved, the member will be carried as “Administrative Leave” on the Unit/Detail payroll time sheet for the days/hours of the event. The traveler must submit to the City Clerk a Third Party Sponsored Travel Form found on COSAWEB>FormsNet within 10 business days of return from the travel.



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3. If taking a City vehicle and use of a fuel credit card will be required, a *Travel Authorization* form will need to be filled out and approved through their chain of command with an estimated cost of fuel.

.05 REQUESTS FOR TRAVEL

- A. Members requesting travel funds should discuss the justification with and obtain the concurrence of their immediate supervisor.
- B. The travel request is completed by the traveler and submitted to the approving supervisor with the following information: COSAWeb > FormsNet > Travel Authorization Request. Utilizing this link will ensure you are using the most current version of the Travel Authorization Request form. Travel Authorization Requests are estimates only. Final costs are not calculated until all receipts are submitted, and the trip is closed.
 1. Specific benefit, function, or purpose for the travel request;
 2. Course/Conference title or school name (Include itinerary when available);
 3. Location(s) of activity;
 4. Dates and times (if necessary) of activity, including delays in the members return due to annual leave taken in conjunction with the travel;
 5. Itemized cost breakdown of projected expenses:
 - a. Transportation to destination (mode, carrier, mileage): Include preferred flight if flying (Southwest is the preferred airline) and note a rental car will only be approved if it is more cost effective.
 - b. Lodging: Single occupancy permitted only for Captain and above; hotel confirmations must be in the traveler's name who is staying in the room and must include a confirmation number. If lodging is booked and pre-paid on-line and a detailed hotel receipt is not available, substantiation of the on-line transaction including a confirmation or itinerary and proof of payment is required. An Airbnb is authorized if it is cheaper than a hotel room or if all hotel rooms are booked. Clear documentation is necessary to show the Airbnb was the lowest cost, or only cost/option available. **Important Note:** Lodging reimbursement is not allowed for trips within 200 miles (round trip) of an employee's assigned work location. This includes Austin, TX. Employees may request lodging expense to be paid up to the dollar amount that would have been spent on mileage to and from the event each day. This requires submission of a mileage form found on COSAWeb>FormsNet>Personal Vehicle Mileage Record along with maps backing up the mileage amounts from mapping software such as Google Maps.
 - c. Meals: Meals are reimbursed according to the rates published by the General Services Administration (GSA) at this link - <https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>, with 33% reimbursed for breakfast and lunch, and 34% for dinner). Use the GSA link for the daily rate only. Calculate the Per Diem, using that daily rate and the percentage for each meal. If the destination city is not listed on the GSA website, use the rate from the closest listed city.
 - d. Transportation at destination (rental car only approved if less expensive than the use of taxi cabs or public transportation, bus, cab, van, ride-share, or city vehicle with fuel estimates), and book rental vehicles through the actual rental car company, not through third party companies or websites. Fees associated with



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parking should be included in the *Travel Authorization Form*.

- e. Registration, tuition, or conference fees (if early registration will be ending soon, include a note with the deadline and regular rate). Include the amount of the registration on the Travel Authorization form, even if Fiscal is paying the cost for you (check the prepaid box).
 - f. Incidental or any other anticipated costs (i.e. internet usage charges, and approved baggage fees-see Administrative Directive 8.31 *Travel* for restrictions) should be included.
6. Commentary on benefit or purpose of program; and
 7. Request for administrative leave (*COSA Notice of Leave* form).
- C. The member's supervisor, upon reception of the travel request, confers with his immediate commander to evaluate the benefit of the requested expenditure and determines the availability of general/grant budgeted funds through the Manager of the Fiscal Services Office.
1. Approvals are initialed in the appropriate space by both supervisors and forwarded through the Chain of Command to the office of the Section/Division/Bureau Commander.
 2. Any trips funded by other city departments must include that Department Financial Administrator in the Chain of Command signature process.
 3. Denials are initialed by both supervisors and returned to the requesting member.
- D. The Bureau Chief reviews the travel request and:
1. If approved, initials, and forwards it to the Fiscal Services Office for a budget allocation review, and if training related, to the Training Academy Commander for a prioritization review if to be funded out of LEOSE funds.
 2. Should the request be denied, the Bureau Chief initials and returns the request down the chain of command to the requesting member.
- E. Fiscal Planning Manager consults with the Training Academy Commander, if applicable, and conducts an evaluation of the request (in relation to those previously budgeted and prioritized by the Office of the Chief at the beginning of the fiscal year).
- F. Final travel authorization and advances will be approved by the Chief of Police, or his designee in accordance with AD 8.31, *Travel*. The City Manager, or designee, may at any time restrict travel and/or direct additional approvals as necessary to be obtained prior to any travel being authorized.
1. Approvals are signed and copies forwarded to the Fiscal Services Office, then down the requesting member's chain of command. The requesting member also receives a memo listing further instructions.
 2. Denials are signed and returned down the requesting member's chain of command.



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3. All approved travel requests must be submitted to the Fiscal Services Office at least one month prior to the member's departure.
4. Group travel, meaning more than 3 persons on the same trip, must receive prior approval by the City Manager's Office (CMO). This includes trips coordinated or funded by one department, even if multiple departments are traveling. These trips will need to be sent by the Fiscal Services Office to CMO for approval.

The signed, approved travel paperwork must be received by the Fiscal Services Office from the traveler one month before the trip begins. The approved paperwork must be received from CMO before any airfare is booked or expense incurred by the Fiscal Services Office. Requests received after the one month deadline will be denied. Exceptions may be granted by the Office of the Chief up to 3 weeks before the travel begins. If travelers are added to an already approved trip and increases the number of travelers to more than 3, all previously approved paperwork must be resubmitted for approval to CMO.

5. Any emergency trip that is taken without a prepared and signed Travel Authorization form may be approved verbally in advance by the Chief of Police and must be documented after the fact.

.06 CASH ADVANCES

- A. Members whose travel request is received later than the fourteenth (14th) day prior to the member's departure are not eligible for a cash advance, unless authorized by the Chief of Police and there are still 7 days prior to departure.
- B. If the advancement is \$100.00 or less, the traveler is not eligible for an advancement.

.07 AUTHORIZED USE OF CITY VEHICLES

- A. Members requesting the use of a city vehicle for travel outside Bexar County must:
 6. Be authorized to operate a city vehicle by the Risk Management Division;
 7. Have requested and received approval for the use of the city vehicle on City of San Antonio (COSA), *Travel Authorization*.
 8. Obtain a city vehicle and motor fuel credit card from the Fiscal Services Office after approval. If there is no city vehicle available, member may request to use POV and mileage reimbursement, which must be approved through the chain of command.
 9. Contact the Fleet Services Office (if applicable) prior to submitting travel authorization for approvals to reserve a city vehicle.

.08 RESPONSIBILITY

- A. Members receiving travel authorization/advancements must contact the Travel Coordinator in the Fiscal Services Office to finalize travel arrangements no later than three one month prior to the date of their departure.
- B. The Fiscal Office is only required to pay the registration fee. The traveler is responsible for completing their own registration form and sending the invoice to accounting, unless payment is due upon registering.



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- C. Each member is expected to be conservative in their expenditures while traveling on city business.
- D. Attendance at any outside conference, school, or seminar is on a voluntary basis. Regardless of trip length, no overtime is to be paid for travel or excess attendance time.
- E. Members returning on the same day as the conclusion of any program. No expenses are authorized beyond that day. If the trip does not exceed twelve (12) hours, per diem will not be paid.
- F. Each member shall be responsible for obtaining original receipts for all expenses, excluding the member's meals, incurred as a result of authorized travel. Reimbursements are not authorized without original receipts.
- G. Each member shall submit all receipts and sign an expense report and submit to the Travel Coordinator in the Accounting and Personnel Office no later than five (5) working days after the member's return to duty.

.09 ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

- H. The allowance for expenses includes all reasonable costs necessarily incurred while conducting city business. The expenses of a member's family are not eligible for payment by the City without prior approval by the City Manager.
- I. Allowable expenses are covered by Administrative Directive *8.31 Travel Authorization and Expenses*, excerpts of which are:
 - 1. Eligible travel expenses include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Intercity transportation (including ride-share);
 - b. Local transportation- travelers should use complimentary shuttle service to and from the airport and to and from the conference meeting sites if provided by the hotel or conference;
 - c. Lodging (including Airbnb);
 - d. Meals; and
 - e. Registration fees.
 - 2. Eligible (restricted) expenses include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Unusual expenses: Expenses such as entertainment for the promotion of the City interest may be eligible depending on the particular circumstance and with proper approval of the Chief of Police; and
 - b. Other incidental expenses: Expenses eligible for payment include tolls, parking charges, cab fares, business related telephone calls, and reasonable laundry and dry-cleaning costs, where absence from the San Antonio area extends over a period of five (5) or more consecutive days.
 - c. Any additional charges over \$100.00 will need to go back through the chain of command for approval.